

Appln No.: 10/071,820
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-12

The Examiner rejects claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) on the view that they are unpatentable over Whitehouse (US 6,005,945) in view of Kara (US 5,822,739).

In general, the undersigned's interpretation of both the Whitehouse and Kara references is that they are related to generating, authenticating, and printing postage indicia. In contrast, the invention of the current application stores and communicates statistical information resulting from the process of franking a batch of mail, as well as performs a cryptographic authenticating procedure upon that information. Unlike the claims of the current application, neither the Whitehouse nor the Kara references disclose capturing, reporting, and cryptographically authenticating statistical information about the franking process.

Claim 1

For convenience, Claim 1 is printed below:

1. (Currently amended) A method for use with a postage meter system under the jurisdiction of a postal authority, the postage meter system comprising a host and a server, the host comprising a postal security device and postal indicia printing means, the server comprising a cryptographic device disposed for cryptographically secure communication with the postal security device, the method comprising the steps of:

entering information into the host indicative of a batch of mail pieces to be franked;

franking the mail pieces whilst storing information about the franking of the batch of mail pieces to a memory within the host;

within the postal security device, performing a cryptographic authenticating procedure upon the information about the franking of the batch and the information indicative of the batch, said information defining statistical

Appln No.: 10/071,820
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

information;

communicating the statistical information from the postal security device to the cryptographic device;

authenticating the statistical information at the cryptographic device; and

passing the statistical information to a postal authority.

The Examiner admits that the Whitehouse reference does not disclose "within the postal security device, performing a cryptographic authenticating procedure upon the information about the franking of the batch and the information indicative of the batch, said information defining statistical information." However, the Examiner states that the Kara reference does disclose this part of Claim 1 in Column 3, lines 5-40.

The undersigned has diligently studied the identified portion of Kara and is unable to find a disclosure of "performing a cryptographic authenticating procedure upon the information about the franking of the batch and the information indicative of the batch, said information defining statistical information," within a postal security device. The undersigned does note, however, that Kara appears to disclose in Column 3, lines 31-33 "inclusion of encrypted data within or accompanying [the] postage indicia." Including encrypted data within a printed postage indicia is not the same as performing a cryptographic authenticating procedure in the host of a postage meter system on statistical information and then sending the statistical information to the server of a postage meter system. Claim 1 of the current application makes no mention whatsoever of postage indicia, other than that the postage meter system is capable of printing it. There is no limitation in Claim 1 of the current invention that includes encrypted data within a printed postage indicia.

Applicant requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Kara reference discloses within the postal security device, performing a cryptographic authenticating

Appln No.: 10/071,820
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

procedure upon the information about the franking of the batch and the information indicative of the batch, said information defining statistical information

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

In addition, the Examiner states that column 6 line 20 thru column 7 line 10 of the Whitehouse reference discloses:

franking the mail pieces whilst storing information about the franking of the batch of mail pieces to a memory within the host; communicating the statistical information from the postal security device to the cryptographic device; authenticating the statistical information at the cryptographic device; and passing the statistical information to a postal authority.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of the Whitehouse reference and is unable to find a disclosure of the above quoted text. Instead, it appears the Whitehouse reference simply discloses a procedure for generation and printing of postage indicia. Some of the indicia disclosed by the Whitehouse reference include digital signatures. In the portion of the Whitehouse reference cited by the Examiner, the undersigned is unable to find any mention of the collection and communication of statistical information about a batch of mail pieces that were just franked. Nor is the undersigned able to find any disclosure in the cited portion of the Whitehouse reference of passing that statistical information to a postal authority.

Applicant requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

franking the mail pieces whilst storing information about the franking of the batch of mail pieces to a memory within the host; communicating the statistical information from the postal security device to the cryptographic device; and passing the statistical information to a postal authority

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Appln No.: 10/071,820
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

Reconsideration of Claim 1 is requested.

Claims 2-11

Claims 2-11 are dependent on Claim 1. Therefore, if Claim 1 is allowed, then Claims 2-11 should also be allowed. Additional arguments for Claims 2, 3, and 6-8 are provided below.

Claim 2:

The Examiner states that column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference discloses performing a cryptographic authenticating procedure comprising the step of calculating a message authentication code and authenticating statistical information comprising the step of checking for correctness of the message authentication code.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of Whitehouse and is unable to find the limitations of Claim 2. It appears to the undersigned that this portion of the Whitehouse reference instead discloses the encryption and decryption of a request for a postage indicium, attaching a digital signature to a request for a postage indicium, and verifying that signature. The undersigned is unable to find a disclosure, in the identified portion of the Whitehouse reference, of authentication codes tied to encrypted statistical information about the franking of a batch of mail pieces. Requesting postage indicium is not the same as collecting and communicating statistical information about the franking of a particular set of mail pieces. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step of performing the cryptographic authenticating procedure compris[ing]
calculating a message authentication code, and the step of authenticating the
statistical information compris[ing] checking for correctness of the message
authentication code

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Claim 3:

Appln No.: 10/071,820

Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

The Examiner states that column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference discloses:

wherein the step of performing the cryptographic authenticating procedure comprises digitally signing the statistical information, and the step of authenticating the statistical information comprises checking for correctness of the digital signature.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of Whitehouse and is unable to find the limitations of Claim 3. It appears to the undersigned that this portion of the Whitehouse reference instead discloses the encryption and decryption of a request for a postage indicium, attaching a digital signature to a request for a postage indicium, and verifying that signature. The Whitehouse reference does not appear to disclose digitally signing statistical information and authenticating that signature. Attaching a digital signature to a request for a postage indicium is not the same as digitally signing statistical information.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step of performing the cryptographic authenticating procedure comprises digitally signing the statistical information, and

the step of authenticating the statistical information comprises checking for correctness of the digital signature

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Claim 6:

The Examiner states that column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step of passing a confirmation from the cryptographic device to the postal security device indicative of receipt by the cryptographic device from the postal security device, and the further step of deleting the statistical information from the postal security device upon receipt of the confirmation.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of Whitehouse and is unable to find the

Appln No.: 10/071,820

Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

limitations of Claim 6. In fact, the undersigned is unable to find any mention at all in column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference of "statistical information" and the deleting of that information.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step of passing a confirmation from the cryptographic device to the postal security device indicative of receipt by the cryptographic device from the postal security device, and

the further step of deleting the statistical information from the postal security device upon receipt of the confirmation

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Claim 7:

The Examiner states that column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step, performed by the postal authority, of granting a discount based on the statistical information.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of Whitehouse and is unable to find the limitations of Claim 7. In fact, the undersigned is unable to find any mention at all in column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference of "statistical information" or "granting a discount" based on that information.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step, performed by the postal authority, of granting a discount based on the statistical information

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Appln No.: 10/071,820
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

Claim 8:

The Examiner states that column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference discloses:
the step, performed by the postal authority, of granting a credit for future franking based on the statistical information.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of Whitehouse and is unable to find the limitations of Claim 8. In fact, the undersigned is unable to find any mention at all in column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference of "statistical information" and "granting credits" based on that information.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step, performed by the postal authority, of granting a credit for future franking based on the statistical information

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Claim 12

Claim 12 is dependent on Claim 11. If Claim 11 is allowed, then Claim 12 should also be allowed.

Reconsideration of Claim 12 is requested.

Claims 13-24

The Examiner also rejects claims 13-24 under 35 U.S.C. on the view that they are unpatentable over Whitehouse (US 6,005,945) in view of Kara (US 5,822,739).

As stated generally with respect to Claims 1-12, the undersigned's interpretation of both the Whitehouse and Kara references is that they are related to generating, authenticating, and printing

Appln No.: 10/071,820

Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

postage indicia. In contrast, the invention of the current application stores and communicates statistical information resulting from the process of franking a batch of mail, as well as performs a cryptographic authenticating procedure upon that information. Unlike the claims of the current application, neither the Whitehouse, nor the Kara references disclose capturing, reporting, and cryptographically authenticating statistical information about the franking process.

Claim 13

For convenience, Claim 13 is printed below:

13. (Currently Amended) A method for use with a postage meter system under the jurisdiction of a postal authority, the postage meter system comprising a host and a server, the host comprising a postal security device and postal indicia printing means, the server comprising a cryptographic device disposed for cryptographically secure communication with the postal security device, the host operated by a service provider providing service to a plurality of users, the method comprising the steps of:

entering information into the host indicative of a batch of mail pieces to be franked and indicative of an identity of a user associated with the batch;

franking the mail pieces whilst storing information about the franking of the batch of mail pieces to a memory within the host;

within the postal security device, performing a cryptographic authenticating procedure upon the information about the franking of the batch and the information indicative of the batch, said information defining statistical information;

communicating the statistical information from the postal security device to the cryptographic device;

authenticating the statistical information at the cryptographic device; and

passing the statistical information to a postal authority.

The Examiner admits that the Whitehouse reference does not disclose:

within the postal security device, performing a cryptographic authenticating

Appln No.: 10/071,820

Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

procedure upon the information about the franking of the batch and the information indicative of the batch, said information defining statistical information.

However, the Examiner states that the Kara reference does disclose this part of Claim 13 in Column 3, lines 5-40.

The undersigned has diligently studied the identified portion of Kara and is unable to find a disclosure of "performing a cryptographic authenticating procedure upon the information about the franking of the batch and the information indicative of the batch, said information defining statistical information," within a postal security device. As with Claim 1, the undersigned notes that Kara appears to disclose in Column 3, lines 31-33 "inclusion of encrypted data within or accompanying [the] postage indicia." Including encrypted data within a printed postage indicia is not the same as performing a cryptographic authenticating procedure in the host of a postage meter system on statistical information and then sending the statistical information to the sever of a postage meter system. Claim 13 of the current application makes no mention whatsoever of postage indicia, other than that the postage meter system is capable of printing it. There is no limitation in Claim 13 of the current invention that includes encrypted data within a printed postage indicia.

Applicant requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Kara reference discloses

within the postal security device, performing a cryptographic authenticating procedure upon the information about the franking of the batch and the information indicative of the batch, said information defining statistical information

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

In addition, the Examiner states that column 6 line 20 thru column 7 line 10 of the Whitehouse reference discloses:

Appln No.: 10/071,820

Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

franking the mail pieces whilst storing information about the franking of the batch of mail pieces to a memory within the host; communicating the statistical information from the postal security device to the cryptographic device; authenticating the statistical information at the cryptographic device; and passing the statistical information to a postal authority.

As stated with respect to Claim 1, the undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of the Whitehouse reference and is unable to find a disclosure of the above quoted text. Instead, it appears the Whitehouse reference simply discloses a procedure for generation and printing of postage indicia. Some of the indicia disclosed by the Whitehouse reference include digital signatures. In the portion of the Whitehouse reference cited by the Examiner, the undersigned is unable to find any mention of the collection and communication of statistical information about a batch of mail pieces that were just franked. Nor is the undersigned able to find any disclosure in the cited portion of the Whitehouse reference of passing that statistical information to a postal authority.

Applicant requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

franking the mail pieces whilst storing information about the franking of the batch of mail pieces to a memory within the host; communicating the statistical information from the postal security device to the cryptographic device; and passing the statistical information to a postal authority

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Reconsideration of the Claim 13 is requested.

Claims 14-23

Claims 14-23 are dependent on Claim 13. If Claim 13 is allowed, then Claims 14-23 should also be allowed. Additional arguments for Claims 14, 15, and 18-21 are provided below.

Claim 14:

Appln No.: 10/071,820
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

The Examiner states that column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference discloses performing a cryptographic authenticating procedure comprising the step of calculating a message authentication code and authenticating statistical information comprising the step of checking for correctness of the message authentication code.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of Whitehouse and is unable to find the limitations of Claim 14. It appears to the undersigned that this portion of the Whitehouse reference instead discloses the encryption and decryption of a request for a postage indicium, attaching a digital signature to a request for a postage indicium, and verifying that signature. The undersigned is unable to find a disclosure, in the identified portion of the Whitehouse reference, of authentication codes tied to encrypted statistical information about the franking of a batch of mail pieces. Requests for postage indicium are not the same as collecting and communicating statistical information about the franking of a particular set of mail pieces. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step of performing the cryptographic authenticating procedure compris[ing] calculating a message authentication code, and the step of authenticating the statistical information compris[ing] checking for correctness of the message authentication code

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Claim 15:

The Examiner states that column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference discloses:

wherein the step of performing the cryptographic authenticating procedure comprises digitally signing the statistical information, and the step of authenticating the statistical information comprises checking for correctness of the digital signature.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of Whitehouse and is unable to find the limitations of Claim 15. It appears to the undersigned that this portion of the Whitehouse

Appln No.: 10/071,820
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

reference instead discloses the encryption and decryption of a request for a postage indicium, attaching a digital signature to a request for a postage indicium, and verifying that signature. The Whitehouse reference does not appear to disclose digitally signing statistical information and authenticating that signature. Attaching a digital signature to a request for a postage indicium is not the same as digitally signing statistical information.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step of performing the cryptographic authenticating procedure comprises digitally signing the statistical information, and

the step of authenticating the statistical information comprises checking for correctness of the digital signature

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Claim 18:

The Examiner states that column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step of passing a confirmation from the cryptographic device to the postal security device indicative of receipt by the cryptographic device from the postal security device, and the further step of deleting the statistical information from the postal security device upon receipt of the confirmation.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of Whitehouse and is unable to find the limitations of Claim 18. In fact, the undersigned is unable to find any mention at all in column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference of "statistical information" and the deleting of that information.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

Appln No.: 10/071,820

Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

the step of passing a confirmation from the cryptographic device to the postal security device indicative of receipt by the cryptographic device from the postal security device, and

the further step of deleting the statistical information from the postal security device upon receipt of the confirmation

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Claim 19:

The Examiner states that column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step, performed by the postal authority, of granting a discount to the user associated with the batch based on the statistical information.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of Whitehouse and is unable to find the limitations of Claim 19. In fact, the undersigned is unable to find any mention at all in column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference of "statistical information" or "granting a discount to the user" based on that information.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step, performed by the postal authority, of granting a discount to the user associated with the batch based on the statistical information

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

Claim 20:

The Examiner states that column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step, performed by the postal authority, of granting a credit for future franking to the user associated with the batch based on the statistical information.

The undersigned has diligently studied the cited portion of Whitehouse and is unable to find the

Appln No.: 10/071,820
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2005

limitations of Claim 20. In fact, the undersigned is unable to find any mention at all in column 12, lines 15-65 of the Whitehouse reference of "statistical information" and "granting credits" based on that information.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to point out exactly where the Whitehouse reference discloses:

the step, performed by the postal authority, of granting a credit for future franking to the user associated with the batch based on the statistical information

or in the alternative, withdraw the rejection.

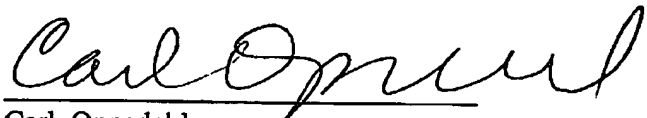
Claim 24

Claim 24 is dependent on Claim 23. If Claim 23 is allowed, then Claim 24 should also be allowed.

Reconsideration of Claim 24 is requested.

For these reasons, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Carl Oppedahl
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 32746

(970) 468-6600